



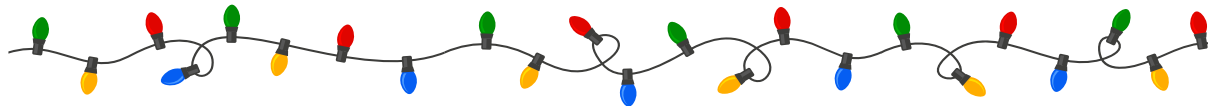
NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING 2021

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021
THE ELLIPSE, PRESIDENT'S PARK



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PROGRAM



LL COOL J, *Host*

Holiday Music

Howard University Gospel Choir
U.S. Army Band Downrange

Greetings

Will Shafroth, *President and CEO*
National Park Foundation

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary of the Interior

Christmas Message and Lighting
of the National Christmas Tree

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
and Dr. Jill Biden

Guest Performers (*in alphabetical order*)

Kristin Chenoweth
H.E.R.
Juanes
Keb' Mo'

Patti LaBelle
Maren Morris
Billy Porter
Chris Stapleton

Audience Sing-A-Long with Santa

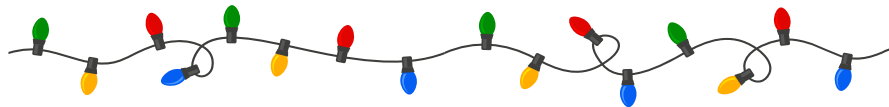
**WELCOME TO
PRESIDENT'S PARK!**

**THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
AND NATIONAL PARK
FOUNDATION ARE EXCITED
TO HAVE YOU JOIN US
TONIGHT IN PRESIDENT'S
PARK, A NATIONAL PARK
THAT SHARES BOTH THE
STORY OF THE WHITE HOUSE
AND THE HISTORY OF
THE UNITED STATES.**

**AS YOU ENJOY TONIGHT'S
FESTIVITIES, REMEMBER
OUR NATIONAL PARKS ARE
WONDERFUL PLACES
TO VISIT WITH YOUR
FAMILY DURING THE
HOLIDAY SEASON.**

**TO PLAN YOUR NEXT VISIT,
GO TO [NPS.GOV](https://www.nps.gov)**

TONIGHT'S PERFORMERS



LL COOL J

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductee, two-time GRAMMY® Award-winning Hip-Hop icon, Kennedy Center Honoree, recording artist, actor, author, NAACP Image Award winner, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and founder and CEO of Rock The Bells, LL COOL J has created one of the most multifaceted careers and brands in entertainment and continues to display his wide range of talents with every project. Three decades after he first burst onto the scene, LL COOL J continues his vibrant, trailblazing career.



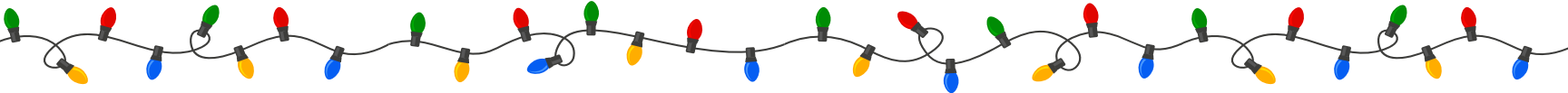
KRISTIN CHENOWETH

TONY® and EMMY® Award-winning actress and singer Kristin Chenoweth's career spans film, television, voiceover and stage. Stage, ("You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown", "Wicked", "On the Twentieth Century"), film ("Rio 2", "My Little Pony: The Movie", "Four Christmases") and television ("Trial & Error", "The West Wing", "Pushing Daisies", "Glee", "Descendants", "Hairspray" and "American Gods"). Chenoweth just released her latest Holiday/Christmas album, "HAPPINESS is...Christmas!"



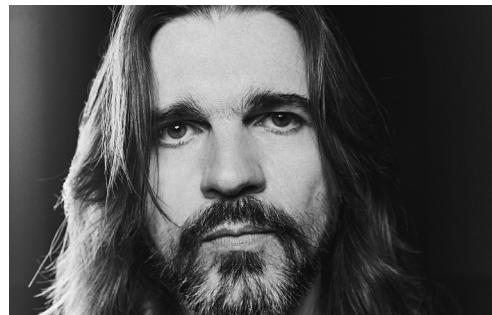
H.E.R.

H.E.R. kicked off 2021 in the most stellar of ways by winning two Grammy Awards – Song of the Year for "I Can't Breathe" and Best R&B Song for her contribution to Robert Glasper's "Better Than I Imagined," plus an Academy Award for her powerful song "Fight For You" from the film "Judas and the Black Messiah." In 2019, she won two Grammy Awards for Best R&B Album and Best R&B Performance and a NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Female Artist, among additional awards and honors.



JUANES

Born and raised in Medellín, Colombia, Juanes is unquestionably Latin Rock's leading global ambassador and champion for social change. Hailed by TIME as "one of the 100 Most-Influential People in the World," and The New York Times as "Latin America's hottest singer-songwriter... a soulful poet with electric guitar," Juanes is the only artist holding two of Billboard's "Top-5 Latin Pop Songs of All-Time," 12 #1 U.S. singles, dozens of television appearances, and 25 combined GRAMMY® & Latin GRAMMY® Awards.



KEB' MO'

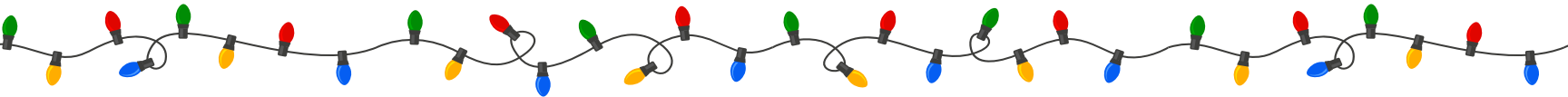
With five GRAMMYs, 14 Blues Foundation Awards, and a groundbreaking career spanning nearly 50 years under his belt, Keb' Mo' stands as one of the most accomplished and respected artists working in contemporary roots music. In the decades that followed his 1994 debut album, Keb' would go on to top the Billboard Blues chart seven times and perform everywhere from Carnegie Hall to the White House. Keb's newest album, "Good To Be," weaves together the sounds of his childhood in Compton with his adopted hometown of Nashville.



PATTI LABELLE

Beautiful simply does not describe the incomparable force known to the world as Patti LaBelle. Through the years, the songbird's name has become synonymous with grace, style, and class. Her effortless ability to belt out classic rhythm and blues renditions, pop standards and spiritual sonnets has created the unique platform of versatility that the artist is known and revered for. For almost 60 years, Patti's strong and soulful voice has left an indelible mark all over the world.





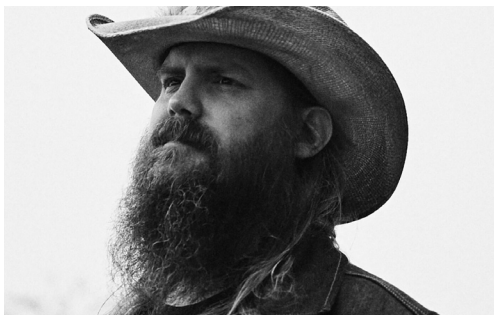
MAREN MORRIS

Maren Morris is one of the leading voices in music today. Her triple platinum single “The Bones” dominated 2020, topping the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart for 19 consecutive weeks and became the first solo female multi-week #1 in country radio since 2012. The single earned Morris Song of the Year and Female Artist of the Year at the 2021 ACM Awards and Female Vocalist of the Year, Single of the Year and Song of the Year at the 2020 CMA Awards, plus and a 2021 GRAMMY® nomination for Best Country Song.



BILLY PORTER

Billy Porter is a GRAMMY®, EMMY®, and TONY® Award-winning singer and actor. Porter took home the EMMY® Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series in 2019 for his work on “Pose,” making history as the first openly gay man to do so. Time Magazine named him one of the “100 Most Influential People” of 2020. Billy released his memoir, “Unprotected,” in October. His directorial film debut, “What If,” is set to drop in 2022. Billy kicks off his next chapter in music, his first love, with a new album coming soon.



CHRIS STAPLETON

Kentucky-born Stapleton is a 5-time GRAMMY®, 10-time CMA and 9-time ACM Award-winner and one of the country’s most respected and beloved musicians. This past fall, Stapleton released his critically acclaimed new album, “Starting Over” – a record that examines life’s simplest joys and most serious struggles. Released to widespread acclaim, it won Album of the Year at the 56th ACM Awards and landed on several “Best of 2020” lists, including NPR Music, Rolling Stone, Billboard, Esquire, Vulture, and The New York Times.



U.S. ARMY BAND DOWNRANGE

The U.S. Army Band Downrange supports the men and women of the Armed Services through popular music, while reaching all audiences, young and old, with their continuously up-to-date repertoire of rock, pop, country, R & B, and inspirational signature patriotic arrangements that are popular with all listeners. The professional musicians are among the most accomplished in the Army and regularly perform at official events in Washington, D.C., as well as public concerts.



HOWARD UNIVERSITY GOSPEL CHOIR

Founded in 1968, the Howard Gospel Choir is the first collegiate choir of its kind in the world and has pioneered an international legacy in gospel music ministry. With an active roster of fifty-plus persons, the choir is one of the largest religious life organizations on campus. The choir has performed with Stevie Wonder, Bonnie Raitt, Chaka Khan, Mary J. Blige, and Fantasia, and is currently under the musical direction of Reginald Golden, a Howard University double graduate from University Heights, OH.



PRE-SHOW ENTERTAINMENT

Marvelous carolers and entertainers welcome guests to the Ellipse tonight:

Central Bucks High School – West Choir, Doylestown, Pennsylvania

Culpeper County HS Blue Devils' Infinity Acapella, Culpeper, Virginia

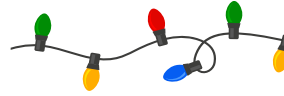
Powerhouse Brass – Pritchard Music, Gaithersburg, Maryland

The Washington Football Team Drumline, Washington, DC

Pre-Show Producer: Elizabeth Yoder

Pre-Show Coordinators: Rosemary Lopez, Mary Thomas

THE NATIONAL TREE: A CHERISHED TRADITION



**PRESIDENT CALVIN COOLIDGE
LIGHTS THE VERY FIRST
NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE
ON THE ELLIPSE IN 1923.**

Library of Congress

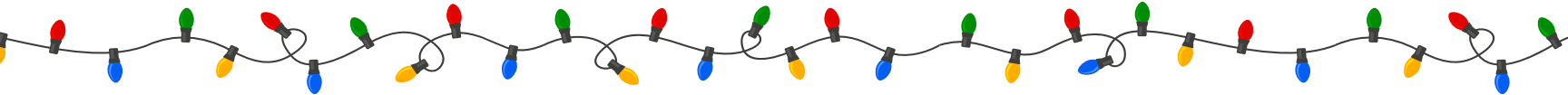
The history of the National Christmas Tree is closely intertwined with the history of America. Through peace and war, from national celebration to national mourning, Americans have gathered together and celebrated the season at this holiday event.

The first National Christmas Tree was placed on the Ellipse south of the White House in December 1923. The tree was a 48-foot Balsam fir donated by the President of Middlebury College in Vermont. At 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve, President Calvin Coolidge walked from the White House to the Ellipse to light the tree from his native state. The tree was decorated with 2,500 electric bulbs in red, white and green, donated by the Electric League of Washington. Music for this first lighting ceremony was provided by a local choir and a quartet from the U.S. Marine Band. This first National Christmas Tree led to the tradition we celebrate today, even as the tree's location and lighting ceremony have changed.

From 1924 to 1933 the tree, renamed the National Community Christmas Tree, was located in Sherman Park, south of the Treasury Building and southeast of the White House grounds. During these years, simple lighting ceremonies and community singing were accompanied by the U.S. Marine Band. The National Park Service's responsibilities for the lands and the tree ceremony began in 1933.

The years 1941 to 1953 found the National Christmas Tree on the South Lawn of the White House. In 1941, on December 24, only weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill led the lighting ceremony and addressed the crowd.

In 1954, the tree moved back to the Ellipse, where it has been located ever since. Also, in 1954, the tree lighting became known as the Christmas Pageant of Peace, a celebration conceived by the Washington Board of Trade and the



Washington Citizen's Committee.

The tree lighting ceremony moved from Christmas Eve to earlier in December and was followed by three weeks of presentations by community groups on the stage at the Ellipse.

While the actual location of the tree in President's Park has moved and the lighting ceremony program has evolved over the years, the purpose remains the same: to bring our local and national communities together to celebrate the season and share the universal message of peace during the holiday season.

In 1978, National Park Service horticulturalists searched for a perfect tree whose life had started under similar environmental conditions as those of Washington, D.C., and a tree that would be healthy and strong enough to survive a move to the Ellipse.

They found the tree in York, Pennsylvania, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Myers. It appeared to be the perfect shape and size, with no disease, and living in just the right soil. The tree had been planted by the Myers' grandchildren. After discussions with the National Park Service horticulturalists, the Myers agreed to let their tree become the nation's Christmas tree.

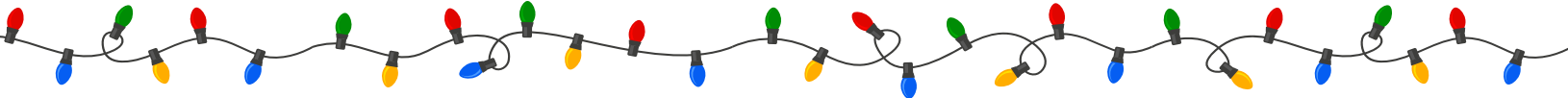
That tree had grown to over 42 feet, served as the National Christmas Tree for six different U.S. Presidents (Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama) and was featured in 33 annual National Christmas Tree Lighting events before being toppled by a strong wind gust on February 19, 2011.

On March 19, 2011, the National Park Service completed the planting of a new National Christmas Tree, exactly one month to the day after the previous National Christmas Tree was felled. This new National Christmas Tree was a 26-foot-tall Colorado blue spruce from a tree nursery in New Jersey.



TWO FRASER FIRS WERE PLANTED ON THE EAST AND WEST SIDES OF THE ANDREW JACKSON STATUE IN LAFAYETTE PARK, IN HOPES THEY WOULD BE USED AS THE NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE IN ALTERNATE YEARS. THIS PHOTO DATES FROM 1934.

National Archives



**THIS 1963 PHOTO INCLUDES THE
NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE,
AS WELL AS THE TREES THAT
MADE UP THE “PATHWAY OF PEACE.”**

National Archives

The tree served as the National Christmas Tree for one tree lighting ceremony in December of 2011. Unfortunately, that tree died of transplant shock and was removed on May 5, 2012.

On October 27, 2012, National Park Service horticulturalists completed the planting of a new National Christmas Tree. That National Christmas Tree is a Colorado blue spruce—the same species as the previous two trees—and, just like the 1978 tree, came to the Ellipse from a private residence, this time from nearby Virginia. That tree was irreparably damaged in 2018 when an individual attempted to climb it.

A new tree was once again been planted on the Ellipse. The 30-foot Colorado blue spruce from Palmyra, Pennsylvania, played the starring role in this revered holiday tradition for two more years before being replaced by the National Park Service.

Tonight, for the first time, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and Dr. Jill Biden will light a white fir tree, planted just a few weeks ago in its new home on the Ellipse in President’s Park. That tree will once again be decorated and lit next year to mark the eagerly anticipated centennial of this beloved holiday tradition.

Christmas is always a special time in and around the White House, and the National Christmas Tree remains an internationally-recognized symbol of the festive season and a living witness to the history being made in our nation’s capital.

To learn more about the history of the National Christmas Tree and view archival photos of previous tree lighting ceremonies, go to TheNationalTree.org.

GE LIGHTING: HONORING AMERICA'S TRADITION

GE Lighting, a Savant company, is honored to provide the lighting and design for the 2021 National Christmas Tree for the second straight year. Over the previous 57 years, the Tree was sponsored by GE Lighting while it was a General Electric company.

This year's design includes a background of warm white lights with a delicate sprinkling of sparkling red and warm white sphere ornaments placed in a cascading pattern from the top all the way down the newly planted white fir tree, with a cluster of sparkling red and white spheres on the lower branches. A simple, yet elegant star topper finishes off the design.

Using the latest in LED lighting products, this is the 13th consecutive year that GE LED lights, many of them ENERGY STAR® certified, have been used exclusively to light the National Christmas Tree.

The National Christmas Tree is a cherished tradition, and with the advancements in LED lighting, innovative designs create new memories year after year. These advancements also offer an opportunity to utilize energy efficient and lighter weight options, helping conserve resources and preserve this living tree.

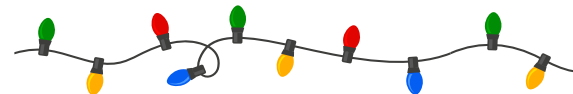
The total wattage is around 5600 watts and because the lights are GE LEDs, they use up to 80% less energy than incandescent lights. The tree will be lit from dusk until around 11:00 P.M. every night.

Check out this year's National Christmas Tree, as well as lighting designs from years past, at [TheNationalTree.org](https://www.thenationaltree.org).

**THIS YEAR'S DESIGN INCLUDES
A BACKGROUND OF WARM
WHITE LIGHTS WITH A DELICATE
SPRINKLING OF SPARKLING
RED AND WARM WHITE SPHERE
ORNAMENTS PLACED IN A
CASCADING PATTERN FROM
THE TOP ALL THE WAY DOWN
THE NEWLY PLANTED
WHITE FIR TREE.**

GE Lighting
A SAVANT COMPANY

STATE AND TERRITORY ORNAMENTS



OVER 1,500 STUDENTS FROM EACH STATE, TERRITORY, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, AS WELL AS BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY SCHOOLS, HAVE GIVEN OF THEIR TIME AND TALENTS TO DESIGN AND CREATE ORNAMENTS REPRESENTING THEIR HOME STATE OR TERRITORY. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR STROLL THROUGH OUR GREAT AND DIVERSE COUNTRY, REFLECTED IN THE ARRAY OF DESIGNS PRESENTED HERE IN THE AMERICA CELEBRATES DISPLAY.

Alabama

McAdory High School

Alaska

Ayaprun Elitnaurvik/Chinook E.S.

American Samoa

Manulele Tausala Elementary School

Arizona

Nogales High School

Arkansas

Virtual Arkansas

Bureau of Indian Education

Pine Springs Day School, AZ

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte School, SD

Lac Court Orielles Ojibwe School, WI

California

Thousand Oaks Elementary School

Colorado

Grand Mountain School

Connecticut

Andover Elementary School

Delaware

Laurel Middle School

Dept. of Defense Education Activity

Vogelweh Elementary, Germany

Humphreys High School, South Korea

Ramey Unit School, Puerto Rico

District of Columbia

Eastern High School

Florida

Osceola High School

Georgia

North Paulding High School

Guam

Academy of Our Lady of Guam

Hawaii

William McKinley High School

Idaho

Idaho Arts Charter School

Illinois

Betty Shabazz International
Charter School

Indiana

Danville North Elementary

Iowa

Johnston High School

Kansas

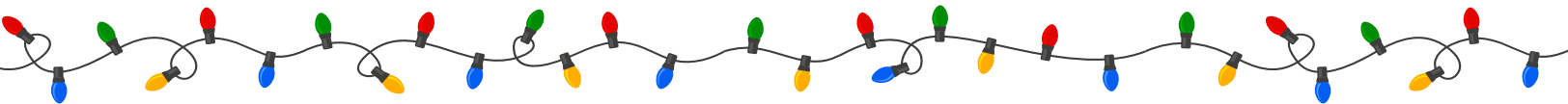
Blue Valley and Most Pure Heart
of Mary Schools

Kentucky

Marion County High School

Louisiana

Washington Marion Magnet H.S.

**Maine**

Bangor High School

Maryland

Manchester Valley High School

Massachusetts

St. John Paul II Catholic Academy

Michigan

Benton Harbor Area Schools

Minnesota

St. Alphonsus Catholic School

Mississippi

Ida B. Wells Academic &
Performing Arts Complex

Missouri

Owensville High School

Montana

Arlee High School

Nebraska

Cody Elementary School

Nevada

Ferron Elementary School

New Hampshire

Rundlett Middle School

New Jersey

Durban Avenue Elementary School

New Mexico

New Mexico School for the Arts

New York

Marlboro High School

North Carolina

Alleghany High School

North Dakota

Sheyenne High School

Northern Mariana Islands

Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands Public School System

Ohio

Shawnee Local Schools

Oklahoma

Glenpool High School

Oregon

Oregon School for the Deaf

Pennsylvania

George W. Nebinger School

Puerto Rico

Dr. Francisco Hernández y Gaetán

Rhode Island

Mary E. Fogarty Elementary

South Carolina

Inman Elementary School

South Dakota

Tri-Valley High School

Tennessee

West Middle School

Texas

Caldwell Arts Academy

U.S. Virgin Islands

St. Croix Educational Complex

Utah

Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Vermont

Colchester High School

Virginia

Binford Middle School

Washington

Harmony Elementary School

West Virginia

Robert L. Bland Middle School

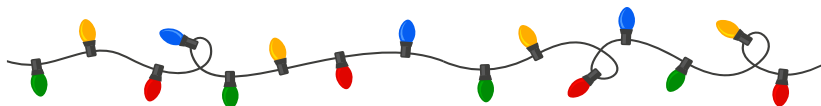
Wisconsin

Highland Community Schools

Wyoming

Eastside Elementary School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The 2021 National Christmas Tree Lighting is presented by the National Park Service and National Park Foundation, with the generous support of the following companies and organizations:



Special thanks to Mountain Top Fraser Fir, Santa's Choice Tree Farm, and Merlyn Farms for donating the trees lining the America Celebrates display.

The National Christmas Tree Lighting is a production of White Rose Way Entertainment.

Leon Knoles	Dino Shorte'	Kenny Gritton	Marc Urselli	Rusty Lee	<i>Special Thanks:</i>
Kristi Foley	Don McClurkin	Kenny White	Matt Russell	Sara Niimi	22 Degrees
Renato Basile	Doug McKinley	Kevin Horiuchi	Megan Monahan	Sewell Johnson	All Access Staging
	Gerard Brancato	Kevin Murphy	Nasrin Rashidi	Sheldon Yellowhair	All Mobile Video
Andrew Gonzalez	James Boore	Kobe King	Olivier Revel	Steve Meyer	Charm City
Anthony Lalumia	James Girona	Kris Simms	Pat Gleason	Steve Morrow	Maryland Sound
Antonio Sol	Jeff Latonero	Kyle Farmer	Paul Bell Jr	Talon Leslie	Mountain Productions
Bern Rexer	Jennifer Naranjo	Larry Boshers	Paul Wittman	Thom Peachee	Norton Projects
Charles Hill	Joe Rose	Lee Steven	Pawel Butkiewicz	Thomas Curran	Saunders Electric
Chris Williams	Joey Despenzero	Linda Carrizzo	Peter Arsenaault	Tiffany Keys	
Darryl Player	Jonathan Burch	Lindsay Saunders Carl	Raymond Hudson	Tim Carmon	Program: J.W. Arnold
David Buergermeister	Joshua Jackson	Lorna Basse	Rod MacDonald	Tshaka Stewart	Cover: UPI / Alamy
David Thibodeau	Julion Francis	Lynn Costa	Roger Melvin		

Special thanks to the dedicated employees of the National Park Service and National Park Foundation and our partners in the White House Visitors Office, whose expertise has made this event possible.

Glacier National Park

WONDER CALLS

Working together with a growing community of passionate park champions, the National Park Foundation strives to ensure that all people are able to discover their own personal sense of wonder and connection to parks, because they don't just stand for where America has been – they inspire where we go next.



**National
Park** Foundation

Get involved at nationalparks.org

